United Nations A/C.2/58/SR.3

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session
Official Records

Distr.: General
24 October 2003

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 7 October 2003, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

General debate *(continued)*

1. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that the failure of the Cancún negotiations on trade and development issues would undoubtedly affect the work of the Second Committee, however, it must move on in preparation for the negotiations in the next Doha round. The international community was increasingly determined to strengthen international cooperation, as evidenced in the commitments undertaken at the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Along with the Millennium Summit, those events provided a global framework for future collective action. The response of the international community to the challenges of development and development financing, the fight against poverty and disease, sustainable development and globalization had already been decided at the highest level. The time had come to translate into reality the development objectives which the heads of State and government had undertaken to accomplish. Thus, 2003 had marked the beginning of a new era, namely, the era of implementation. The development of the countries of the South and their integration into the world economy should not be contingent upon their continued accommodation to the unfair and inequitable rules that governed world economic relations.

2. The right to development should be a central concern in efforts to consolidate international cooperation through a renewed North-South partnership based on shared responsibilities and benefits. A special effort must be made to increase official development assistance, provide debt relief, open up markets to products from the South, increase flows of foreign direct investment to developing countries, especially in Africa, and reform the international financial architecture in order to allow for greater transparency and increased participation by the developing countries.

3. The current session of the General Assembly marked the first anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on a New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the adoption of NEPAD as the general framework for international efforts to contribute to the development of Africa. The General Assembly would have an opportunity to measure the progress achieved in the implementation of the new partnership and decide on further action to consolidate international support for African development. Such action must be carried out with due regard for the principles of universality, neutrality and objectivity, so as to avoid interfering in the domestic affairs of the countries concerned.

4. Efforts to improve the living conditions of the peoples of the world must be carried out within a context of sustainable development. Access to energy, to drinking water and to sanitation services would be crucial in the fight against poverty and would need to be given top priority if the objectives of the Millennium and of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation were to be achieved.

5. The problem of desertification and drought had not yet been adequately dealt with by the international community. The Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought was a useful tool, but it could not be implemented without substantial financial and technical resources and coordinated collective action. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention had recently decided that the Global Environment Facility should become a mechanism for financing the Convention. His delegation welcomed that decision and trusted that the declaration of 2004 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification would further contribute to raising awareness among the international community of the seriousness of the phenomenon and the threat it represented for the planet.

6. The lack of financial resources had seriously hampered the development capacity of the developing countries. The Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus provided a frame of reference for a responsible partnership that could promote growth and sustainable development. The Johannesburg Summit had confirmed the commitment of the international community to work for sustainable development so as to meet the needs of present and future generations, while protecting the environment.

7. **Mr. Andjaba** (Namibia), stressing the inseparable link between international security and economic development, said that the agreements reached at the sixth ordinary session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification,

particularly in Africa, held in Havana, and the International Ministerial Conference on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in Almaty, should be implemented within the framework of General Assembly resolution 57/270 B on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields. His delegation looked forward to the review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2005.

8. The failure by the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Cancún, to reach agreement heightened the responsibility of the Second Committee to address macroeconomic policy issues. His delegation hoped that the Cancún Conference would be viewed as a "lesson learned" and that the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference, would form the basis for further progress at the eleventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to be held in Brazil in 2004. The international community possessed the capacity and resources to combat poverty and HIV/AIDS; the only thing lacking was political will. His delegation looked forward to the forthcoming World Summit on the Information Society, which should help to bridge the digital divide and facilitate technology transfer to developing countries. It also looked forward to participating in the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly on financing for development.

9. Namibia's earnest attempts to implement the Millennium Development Goals had been hindered by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and, more recently by natural disasters such as drought and floods. His delegation was concerned that, according to recent data, Africa was not likely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, particularly that of halving extreme poverty by 2015. He reiterated the need for more generous assistance from the international community, and for a holistic approach to their implementation; selective implementation must not be tolerated. Namibia would continue to work to enhance international cooperation through partnership. In particular, as a member of the African Union, it would urge the international community to deliver on promises made in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

10. **Mr. Drobnjak** (Croatia) said that "soft threats", such as environmental problems, contagious diseases, economic dislocation, crime, domestic violence, corrupt management and simple poverty, highlighted the importance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. He welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/58/323), particularly the conclusions concerning the need for stronger international solidarity and responsibility, together with greater respect for decisions reached collectively (para. 91). He also welcomed General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, which provided a useful point of departure for re-examining and revitalizing the work of the General Assembly and its committees, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes. To that end, full and constant cooperation between Member States and the Secretariat would be essential.

11. The Committee should take into account the Doha Development Agenda, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development and should give political impetus and support to new partnerships with the ultimate aim of contributing to a new form of multilateralism.

12. Despite the disappointment surrounding the breakdown of trade negotiations in Cancún, it was to be hoped that the momentum for real action towards a more transparent, rule-based and equitable multilateral trading system would be revived at subsequent negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO). His delegation strongly supported current efforts by the Bretton Woods institutions to encourage the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their decision-making processes. It welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of and follow-up to commitments and agreements made at the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/58/216) and particularly the finding that a number of developing and transition economies had increased their efforts to make this decision-making processes more participatory and inclusive of civil society, the private sector and local communities (para.11).

13. Foreign direct investment and official development assistance were sorely needed to complement national efforts. In that connection, the 5 per cent increase in official development assistance in

2002 was indeed heartening. Noting that economic prosperity was a deterrent to extremism, terrorism and crime, he welcomed the increasingly strong role played by the Economic and Social Council and called for further development of cooperation between the Council and the Bretton Woods institutions through their special high-level meetings held every spring, and between the Council and WTO. Focusing on one or two topics from the Monterrey Consensus would lead to more effective implementation of the commitments undertaken at the International Conference on Financing for Development. He commended the Council's holistic approach to peace-building and the creation of stable democracies, blending capacity-building, the strengthening of existing institutions and economic and financial recovery and said that the Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau and its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Burundi were examples of appropriate mechanisms to that end. His delegation hoped that the Committee would support the Council's efforts to promote development in post-conflict situations.

14. True partnerships, the involvement of all relevant actors and the effective mobilization of women in development would be crucial to mobilizing needed resources. With regard to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, he stressed the need to integrate all three pillars of sustainable development in overall development strategy and to review the mechanisms for monitoring progress. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the new programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, aimed at simultaneous implementation and assessment.

15. **Mr. Requeijo Gual** (Cuba) said that, one year after the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the world had not changed. The rich continued to grow richer and the poor continued to grow poorer. How could there be any hope for a better world when 30 per cent of the global gross domestic product was concentrated in a single country, and 94 per cent of hunger victims lived in developing countries?

16. Despite the promises made in Monterrey, the developed countries were allocating only 0.22 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance, far short of their original commitment of 0.7 per cent. While they were expected to provide $53 billion in official development assistance in 2003, they would be collecting more than $350 billion in interest on external debt. Under those circumstances, external debt could only continue to grow. In Latin America alone, the external debt had increased from $5 billion in 1959 to $800 billion in 2003.

17. Worst of all, the Fifth Ministerial Conference of WTO had failed to respond to the pleas of developing countries to end subsidies on the products they exported, and to be given special and differential treatment. As a result, participation by third world countries in international trade had dropped below its 1980 level. Meanwhile, commodity prices were plummeting.

18. Of what significance was trade liberalization when, for four decades, his country had been denied the right to engage in free trade as a result of an ironclad and brutal economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the most powerful country in the world? How well regulated was the international trade system when a single country could apply extraterritorially the laws known as the "Toricelli" and "Helms-Burton Acts", which violated the sovereignty of third States and restricted trade with Cuba by firms in those countries? The United States even prevented its own companies from exporting food to Cuba and its citizens from travelling there. The forthcoming high-level dialogue on financing for development should establish a vital framework for pursuing dialogue between industrialized and developing countries, and among the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization.

19. One of the Committee's most complex tasks during the current session will be consideration of its programme of work within the context of General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, a question to which his delegation attached great importance. Recalling the experience of the major international financial institutions, he expressed the hope that the results of that exercise would enable the Committee to continue its independent consideration of macroeconomic policy questions, without being forced to reflect the will of the major powers. In the forthcoming deliberations, his delegation would be focusing special attention on the preparations for the international meeting for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, operational activities for development and the implementation of

the decisions taken at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

20. **Mr. Talha** (Bangladesh) said that the present was a worrisome time: the flow of foreign direct investment was drying up and the poor were getting poorer.

21. Despite initial hopes that globalization would bring with it higher incomes and better standards of living, most of the developing world had been unable to fully integrate with the process. Innovative financial mechanisms were required to help the developing countries eradicate poverty and achieve sustained growth and sustainable development. The setback at Cancún warranted early resumption of the negotiations; a breakthrough would require courageous decisions and significant compromises. The international community's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals also required that the negotiations should be concluded successfully. Steps should be taken to prepare for negotiations in the next Doha round and the commitments made by the developed world should be honoured before new issues were taken up. His delegation was concerned to see the many tariff and non-tariff barriers that restricted market access to products from developing countries into the markets of developed countries.

22. His delegation was concerned about the status of implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the least developed countries. Those countries were trying to include the programmatic elements of the Brussels Programme in their national programmes.

23. Bangladesh identified with the problems of Africa and believed in the efficacy of South-South cooperation. It had built special bonds with many of the African nations through its participation in their peacekeeping and development efforts.

24. Bangladesh had come a long way since the early 1970s. Thanks to a mixture of sound macroeconomic policies, appropriate utilization of external assistance and innovative home-grown ideas such as microcredit and non-formal education. It now produced 26.8 million tons of food grains to feed its 130 million people and had reduced its population growth rate by one half over the past two decades. Gender mainstreaming was a major policy goal, and the overall health and education profile had been significantly raised. In the view of his delegation, development could only be achieved in a context of pluralism, liberalism, democracy, good governance, human rights and women's empowerment. While development must be primarily a national concern, it was the international community that must provide the global background and the enabling environment that was needed.

25. **Ms. Mohammed** (Kenya) said that the economic policies pursued by developed countries continued to adversely affect the performance of the economies of developing countries. The external debt situation of developing countries, continued to deprive governments of resources that might otherwise be invested in social services such as health, education and infrastructure development. Her delegation therefore called for sustainable solutions to the debt problem that would cater for all indebted countries. Over the years, official development assistance to developing countries had continued to decline in real terms. Donor countries should strive to meet the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance. Not enough had been done to increase the effective participation of developing countries in the Bretton Woods institutions. Her delegation hoped that the forthcoming General Assembly High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development would support the sentiments of developing countries on that issue. International trade continued to benefit the most advanced industrial countries while the rest of the world accounted for a negligible percentage of the total. Market access for the products of developing countries should be improved, and donor countries should help developing countries improve their infrastructure so as to reduce production costs and enhance the competitiveness of their products in the world market.

26. The slow pace of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals was likely to cause delays in reaching the agreed target dates, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Her delegation called upon development partners to provide the requisite means of implementation, and underscored the importance of achieving a global partnership for development, as the necessary precondition for the fulfilment of all other goals.

27. The HIV/AIDS pandemic continued to pose a serious threat to the development efforts of African countries. At the national level, the Government of Kenya was implementing a strategic plan based on key priority areas, including prevention and advocacy, treatment, support and care, mitigation of the socio-

economic impact of the disease and research. As a result of those actions at the national level and with support from her country's development partners, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS had declined. Her Government called for more support from its bilateral and multilateral partners.

28. Poverty eradication was one of the major challenges facing the world. Kenya recognized that poverty reduction was key to the economic prosperity of the country and her Government was implementing an economic recovery strategy for wealth and employment creation. As the strategy would require large outlays of expenditure, external financing would be necessary to complement domestic resources. At the multilateral level, her delegation welcomed the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund to eradicate poverty and urged donor countries to contribute to the Fund so that it could begin operations immediately.

29. Corruption was another major challenge to many African countries, as it diverted scarce resources and diminished prospects for development. Given the transnational nature of corruption, anti-corruption strategies and measures were needed that would cut across international borders. Kenya was actively involved in regional and international initiatives to eliminate corruption and looked forward to the signing, later that year, of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. At the national level, her Government had enacted several laws to combat the vice, including the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act 2003 and the Public Officer Ethics Act 2003.

30. Environmental degradation continued to undermine the prospect of fighting poverty and realizing social and economic development in developing countries. Adequate financial and technical resources were needed, as well as capacity-building for developing countries, in order to ensure speedy implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

31. Her delegation called for more support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and welcomed the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. The latter should receive adequate funding so that it could fulfil its mandate in a timely and effective manner.

32. Her delegation was encouraged by the ongoing expansion of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). In line with the Headquarters rule, as reaffirmed by General Assembly resolution 54/248, Kenya would like to see all UNEP and UN-Habitat meetings held at UNON. With regard to financing of UNEP and UN-Habitat, her Government called for increased allocations from the United Nations regular budget to ensure predictable funding and better planning and implementation of their work programmes.

33. Finally, her delegation welcomed the outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

34. **Mr. Al-Haddad** (Yemen) said that the tragic deaths which had occurred as a result of the August attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad should not deter the Organization from continuing its assistance to the Iraqi people. Yemen greatly appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen the pioneering role of the United Nations in promoting multilateral economic and social cooperation, as well as the important reform efforts under way. He commended the success of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields in dealing with the complex issues of its mandate and welcomed inter alia the idea of convening a major event in 2005 in order to review the progress achieved in implementing commitments made.

35. Although the latest indicators pointed to an improvement in the global economy, it would be unwise to be over-optimistic given the continuing adverse effect of geo-political tensions. Further reform of the structure of international finance and trade was urgently needed in order to promote development. Given that a strong economic revival was partly contingent on resolving the difficulties surrounding the world trade negotiations, the failure of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Cancún had been disappointing. Interdependence was a fact and the furtherance of progress in the developing countries was a prerequisite to the achievement of a globalized economy and the guarantee of security and stability for

the world's inhabitants. The return to the negotiating table should therefore be based on recognition of those truths.

36. With reference to the high-level dialogue on financing for development, it was essential to move forward from general policy discussions and demonstrate political will by taking action to mobilize finance for development activities in the developing countries, deal with external debt questions and improve coordination among international monetary, financial and trade organizations.

37. His country was devoting a substantial portion of its budget to completing the infrastructure needed for the sustainable and comprehensive development that would ensure the economic and social well-being of the Yemeni people. It was also steadily accruing the benefits of a stronger political system based on the principles of democracy and party pluralism. In early 2003, parliamentary elections had been held and efforts to decentralize government were under way. All relevant sectors were presently engaged in the important task of preparing the country's third Human Development Report and care was being taken to ensure that all partners remained fully involved in the development process with a view to harmonizing Yemen's national programmes with the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in connection with the eradication of poverty.

38. **Mr. de Rivero** (Peru), speaking on behalf of the countries belonging to the Rio Group, said that although the Latin American countries had been following all the macroeconomic prescriptions for over a decade, the average per capita income of Latin America had increased by only 1.33 per cent. Poverty and indigence rates had remained practically constant since 1997. Moreover, flows of foreign investment to Latin America and the Caribbean had declined so much that the region was currently a net exporter of financial resources; interest payments and profits paid out accounted for US$ 15 billion. Unless income levels were improved, poverty was reduced and employment grew, democratic governance would be threatened by the increasing social demands of the population.

39. For all those reasons, the Heads of State of the 19 Latin American countries belonging to the Rio Group had decided in May 2003, that financial mechanisms should be established to strengthen democratic governance and fight poverty by attracting new resources for productive investment and job creation. Various mechanisms were being discussed by Government experts and would be discussed later by the Ministers of Economic Affairs of the Rio Group. It was to be hoped that in due course, the Group of Eight, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations would consider ways to support those proposals, which were aimed at strengthening democratic governance in the region.

40. The Rio Group wished to express its concern at the outcome of the recent Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization at Cancún. The Rio Group supported and practised free trade, but considered that it was a two-way street. Improved market access for products from developing countries, elimination of agricultural subsidies on the part of developed countries and effective application of special and differential treatment for developing countries were essential if there was to be a symmetrical relationship in international trade. The Rio Group trusted that negotiations would be resumed in Geneva over the next few months and that such negotiations would be geared towards development.

41. It was important that General Assembly resolution 57/270 B should be implemented effectively, in order to ensure that there were regular reviews of the level of compliance with the commitments and goals adopted at the recent major conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Each of those conferences had concluded with a consensus, and all those consensuses together constituted the "great consensus" of the United Nations for the twenty-first century. That great consensus should be disseminated throughout the world. The Committee should work not only to publicize the consensus but also to ensure that the commitments contained therein were fully complied with.

42. **Mr. Nambiar** (India) said that the forecast economic recovery in the developed countries was proving weak owing to a variety of factors. Global trade growth of less than 2 per cent in 2002 compared poorly with the average rate of almost seven per cent in the 1990s. Flows of foreign direct investment had also contracted drastically, and the negative net transfer of resources in 2002 had been almost double the average annual levels of 1998-2002. While official

development assistance (ODA) had marginally increased it remained way below the target of 0.7 per cent. No durable solution had been found for the debt crisis of many developing countries, and the increased protectionist measures against their exports limited their capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and their own poverty-alleviation targets.

43. The time limits set at Doha for resolution of implementation issues had been breached even before the Cancún meeting, which had failed to produce an agreement addressing the interests of the developing countries. Addressing those interests was an indispensable step towards more equitable globalization. The forthcoming High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development would enable the General Assembly to assess the outcome of the Monterrey Conference, in particular the concern of all developing countries to achieve greater equity in economic relations and acquire a more powerful voice in decision-making.

44. Developing countries would make progress with regard to Johannesburg Plan of Implementation only when the developed countries fulfilled their commitments in that connection. The involvement of the private sector and civil society would help but was not a substitute for those commitments.

45. Under General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, the Second Committee had the important responsibility of improving it own programme of work as part of the overall reform of the United Nations, an issue on which his delegation was ready to work actively with others. The Committee would also have an important role in the preparations for the 2005 conference for review on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Summit had recognized the opportunities offered by information and communication technologies (ICT). The forthcoming World Summit on the Information Society should focus on how to achieve ICT for all and harness ICT to assist the developing countries.

46. India supported the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; the review ought to result in increased support for the Programme's implementation. The implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action on transit transport cooperation required active cooperation among landlocked countries, transit developing countries and their developed-country partners. The General Assembly should keep the Programme's implementation under review.

47. The World Bank had estimated that the developing countries would need an additional $50 billion a year in ODA in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. As the Secretary-General had pointed out at the beginning of the session, achievement of the Goals would require a collective response by the international community. India hoped that such a response would be forthcoming.

48. **Mr. Laurin** (Canada) said that in the spirit of the reform of the United Nations and the calls of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly for better focus in the work of the Second Committee, the delegations of Andorra, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, San Marino and Switzerland had decided to speak under individual items rather than in the general debate. That approach should lead to a more focussed and coherent discussion and would make best use of the time available. Other delegations were encouraged to do likewise. The Chairman's proposals on improvement of the Committee's working methods would also contribute to its effectiveness and efficiency.

49. **Mr. Djumala** (Indonesia) said that the adverse effects of the slow growth of the world economy on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals had been made worse by the failure of the Cancún meeting, in particular the failure of the developed countries to make a political commitment to the Doha Development Agenda. The General Assembly must evaluate the implementation of all internationally agreed development goals and provide the necessary strategic political guidance in the light of the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Monterrey Consensus. Indonesia agreed with the conclusion reached by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/58/323) that the international community now had the resources to eradicate human poverty: it must redouble its efforts to use those resources, and donor countries in particular should do more to assist the developing countries.

50. The measures adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development to expedite the implementation of the Johannesburg Programme of Implementation were welcome, as were the efforts to

improve the inter-agency follow-up mechanisms. The United Nations system must do what was needed to achieve the targets falling within their mandates.

51. His delegation noted that a portion of the $16 billion committed at Monterrey had already been channelled to certain sectors, and that there had been a slight but welcome increase in ODA. Much more was needed and he urged the developed countries to meet the 0.7 per cent target. It had also been agreed at Monterrey that the interest of developing countries should be placed at the heart of the WTO work programme, for an equitable trading system was essential to development; for that to happen, the products of developing countries must be given greater access to developed markets.

52. His delegation believed that the Committee should focus on the implementation of the outcomes of all the relevant international conferences. Such implementation must be based on collaboration between the Economic and Social Council, the Second Committee and the General Assembly, as specified in resolution 57/270 B. The present session must also continue the reform of the General Assembly's work programme, but the reform must not result in the downgrading of any agenda items crucial to the developing countries. The alarm bell sounded at Cancún was a reminder that development goals could never be attained without a commitment to address the plight of poor human beings.

53. **U Win Mra** (Myanmar) said that the global economic outlook was far from satisfactory and that, if the present rate of progress continued the Millennium Development Goals might never be attained. The breakdown of the Cancún negotiations served the interests of neither the developing countries nor the developed States. Negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda must be restarted and trust in WTO must be rebuilt. An important consensus had been reached at Monterrey on the financing of development, and the forthcoming High-Level Dialogue was welcome. But substantial increases in ODA and a drastic reduction in developing-country debt remained to be seen. Myanmar urged the developed countries to fulfil the commitments made to the developing countries.

54. The Commission on Sustainable Development had reached an encouraging agreement on the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and should play an important part in that implementation. The Myanmar Government was committed to implementing its own Agenda 21. It was a party to most of the international environment conventions and had recently acceded to the Kyoto Protocol.

55. The implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries was far from satisfactory; its full implementation would help the least developed countries enjoy the benefits of globalization. As a transit country, Myanmar was ready to cooperate with its landlocked neighbours under the Almaty Programme of Action on transit transport cooperation.

56. Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals was compatible with Myanmar's national economic development goals. The Government had adopted a 30-year plan to improve rural roads and had designated the 2002-2003 financial year as the Year of Clean Water and Rural Roads; public donations had made a substantial contribution to the water-supply projects. In that connection, the work of UNDP under the Myanmar Human Development Initiative Programme covered only 3 per cent of the rural population and required more resources.

57. The inter-related problems of international peace and security, economic and social development, and environmental protection required a balanced approach, with proportionate resources allocated to economic and social development. His delegation welcomed the General Assembly's decision to review in 2005 the implementation of the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Development Goals were the best hope for the world's poor and could be achieved if the present momentum was maintained.

58. **Ms. Ndhlovu** (South Africa)said that the failure of the Cancún meeting to move the Doha Development Agenda forward would make it even harder to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Nevertheless, important lessons would be drawn from the meeting. For the first time, the developing countries had acted in concert to advance the Development Agenda. South Africa's Minister of Trade and Industry had said that the proposals submitted by the Group of 21 had marked a new chapter in the WTO process that would be decisive in advancing the negotiations. Another lesson

was that the countries in an advantaged position must make sacrifices to create a just and better world.

59. A consensus had been reached at Doha on the need for a new trade environment; trade was an engine of economic growth and could contribute to poverty eradication. The call for the removal of agricultural subsidies in developed countries should therefore be understood as a call for equity. The amount of such subsidies far exceeded ODA, for example. South Africa remained committed to the Doha mandate, but the concerns of the developing countries would have to be taken into account if the process was to move forward. In that sense, Doha had to remain a development round, and the developed countries must accept that the burden of reform rested with them.

60. The main reason for the recent development disappointments was that the global economic recovery had not materialized. Since the under-performance of the global economy limited the development potential of the developing countries, international development cooperation must be revitalized. In his statement in the general debate in the General Assembly the President of South Africa had said that global poverty and under-development were the principal problems facing the United Nations. The challenge, for the Second Committee in particular, was to identify the necessary concrete actions.

61. The debt burden remained a major obstacle to development, but the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative still lacked adequate funding. Since part of the problem was structural, the whole Initiative might have to be reconsidered. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) recognized the important contribution of information and communication technologies (ICT) to poverty alleviation and growth stimulation. ICT should be seen as a tool for achieving economic and social goals.

62. The efforts to reform the international financial and trade institutions must be enhanced. Developing countries should have a bigger stake in those institutions because they were the main consumers of their services and targets of their programmes. The institutions should also be flexible enough to accommodate the challenges of countries at different stages of development, and the reform effort must take the question of coherence into account. South Africa believed that strong multilateral institutions were the only guarantee against domination by the strongest. It would support the Secretary-General's efforts to reform the Organization and maintain its primacy in world affairs; the Second Committee should consider its place in the reform.

63. Her delegation welcomed the work programme adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and stressed the importance of implementation at the country level. It looked forward to the High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development.

64. **Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga** (Ecuador) said that although for the past decade developing countries had been adopting extensive structural economic reforms to promote greater efficiency in the allocation of resources, they still confronted serious difficulties and structural weaknesses. Economic growth and the creation of productive employment had fallen to notoriously inadequate levels and the scarcity of opportunities to improve living standards presented a threat to governance and democratic processes.

65. Increased migratory flows — through both official and unofficial channels — had become a truly global phenomenon. Undocumented migrants were vulnerable to being exploited. The international community must tackle the problem of international migration and recognize that countries of origin and host countries shared the responsibility for protecting migrants.

66. External debt remained one of the most serious obstacles to development. Because of huge debt servicing payments Governments had fewer resources to spend on implementing social programmes and developing infrastructure. External debt must be regarded as a social, human issue, requiring a global and humanitarian covenant between debtors and creditors.

67. Developing countries were still prevented from fully developing their capacities because of trade barriers and other protectionist measures which limited access of their commodities to the most dynamic and economically vibrant markets. Moreover, continued unfair trading practices, such as subsidies, not only seriously distorted trading patterns, but also had a destructive effect on production in developing countries. The multilateral trading system could represent a powerful tool in the improvement of well being, but in order to derive such benefits,

development must be a key component. Ecuador was convinced that multilateralism provided the only guarantee for international harmony, under the rule of law, and in the quest for general well-being.

68. **Mr. Ramadan** (Lebanon) said that the elimination of poverty, through the creation of an environment that was conducive to development, was one of the major aspirations of the peoples of the world. Such an environment required a just international trading system, free of agricultural subsidies, trade barriers and other measures that hampered the flow of manufactured goods and commodities from exporting developing countries.

69. His delegation believed that the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus should be strengthened and regretted to note that official development assistance (ODA) levels would not be sufficient to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and that there had been no improvement in foreign direct investment (FDI) or external debt.

70. Globalization brought with it new opportunities but also inequitable distribution of benefits. Steps must be taken to create the just international economic and financial systems that were necessary for sustainable development; in particular reform of the international financial institutions, was essential in order to encourage greater participation of the developing countries in decision-making processes.

71. **Ms. Davila** (Colombia) noted that the global economy was still feeling the effects of the slowdown which had begun two years earlier. The international community must therefore strengthen its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

72. With the decline in foreign direct investment, Latin America had become a net exporter of financial resources, and to make matters worse, international prices of major commodities had fallen sharply. Millions of farmers and their families throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean depended on the coffee industry. Their incomes had fallen significantly in recent years since coffee prices had been set exclusively by market forces. The absence of markets for alternative products had also undermined attempts to eradicate rural poverty, to stem population flows from rural to urban areas, and had thwarted efforts to curb the illicit economy.

73. International determination to take up the global challenge to overcome poverty, notwithstanding, the poverty index of Latin America and the Caribbean stood at 40 per cent economic growth in the region for 2003 was not expected to exceed 1.5 per cent. In spite of low international prices for coffee, consumers in developing countries continued to pay premium prices. She therefore urged consumers and coffee-producing countries to strengthen cooperation to bolster mechanisms for dialogue such as the International Coffee Organization.

74. Developing countries also incurred additional costs such as those derived from the fight against the illicit trade in drugs: Colombia's narcotics squads had used increasing amounts of budgetary resources which would normally have been earmarked for social development. The Government was proud of its achievements over the past year in reducing the production of illicit drugs by 30 per cent and in recovering vast expanses of woodlands which had previously been used for the cultivation of illicit crops. Nevertheless, the criterion of shared responsibility must be applied, and efforts must be redoubled to cut consumption, control the production and diversion of chemical precursors and to intensify cooperation in order to prevent money-laundering globally.

75. Colombia was committed to the goal of curbing transnational crime in all its dimensions, as reiterated in the Millennium Declaration. That objective was even more a priority for Colombia not only because the international drug trade adversely affected its capacity for development, but also because of the link between drug trafficking and terrorism. A drug-free world would undoubtedly be a more secure world and would provide wider access to economic prosperity. She noted that terrorist movements used social imbalances to their advantage; accordingly, development should be seen as an important instrument for the promotion of international security. Cooperation between countries within a framework of fairness and balance was essential to securing the constructive involvement of developing countries in the decision-making process relating to global monetary and financial matters, and forging stronger multilateral rules of international trade. Firm commitment to the reduction of domestic assistance and subsidies and meaningful improvement of market access conditions were therefore crucial.

76. Quoting International Monetary Fund sources, she said that if tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade

and subsidies were eliminated, the world economy would grow by 120 billion dollars, a figure that would multiply development aid and debt relief budgets, in the interest of both low- and medium-income countries.

77. The failure of the Fifth WTO Ministerial Meeting should not deter Member States from engaging in future negotiations. Colombia would remain committed to the negotiations, and believed it was time for countries with the greatest economic options to take on greater obligations.

78. **Ms. Chenoweth** (Observer for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), drawing attention to certain issues which linked the work of FAO to that of the Committee, said that hunger continued to cause widespread suffering. Due to the inadequacy of available resources and limited political will among development partners, unless corrective action were taken as a matter of urgency, the goal of halving the number of victims of hunger by 2015 would not be achieved until the year 2115.

79. Nevertheless, FAO welcomed the Declaration adopted by Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 and China in September 2003, which reiterated their commitment to eradicate poverty and hunger and to raise living standards, and called for decisive action by the international community to assist developing countries in their efforts. She also referred to other instances which underscored the interest displayed by world leaders in critical areas including agriculture, rural development, food security and market access, and reaffirmed FAO's support to Member States.

80. Finally, she informed the Committee of various activities, studies, publications, special events and initiatives undertaken by FAO in cooperation with the international community with a view to eradicating hunger and poverty.

81. **Mr. Robinson** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)) expressed concern at the lack of progress made in reaching the goals set at the Millennium Assembly, adding that IUCN supported the current focus on poverty eradication, and in particular, the recognition that poverty reduction efforts must address the multi-dimensional character of human well-being. It was however discouraging that the sophisticated understanding of poverty revealed by recent research, and the public statements espoused by donors and recipients had not been adequately reflected in current development policy and practice.

82. IUCN was ready to work with the United Nations and its specialized agencies to deepen support for sustainable development, including through the advancement of an appropriately broad and comprehensive definition of conservation that made clear the fundamental relevance of conservation to poverty eradication and ecosystem management. The principal conclusion of the recent Fifth World Parks Congress was that natural areas protected for conservation should be integrated within a broad sustainable development planning agenda, ensuring full participation of relevant stakeholders, including local and indigenous communities, and equitable sharing of benefits.

83. He pledged the continued support of IUCN for the implementation of multilateral agreements and the agencies of the United Nations on sustainable development noting that it was committed to working with the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development, especially with regard to the forthcoming deliberations on water. IUCN also worked to build technical capacity through environmental legal education and research, and had just created the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law, a world-wide network of universities with significant environmental law programmes to support the United Nations in building capacity for government agencies, the judiciary and the public.

84. The need for mutual supportiveness between trade and sustainable development had been affirmed steadily since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. However, much remained to be done. The United Nations system could play a key role in promoting the urgently needed international policy and legal coherence between sustainable development and trade. IUCN urged the United Nations system to engage more strategically and proactively in ensuring a successful outcome of the Doha Development Agenda, and to intensify its longer-term efforts to achieve mutual supportiveness between trade and sustainable development in a manner that enhanced stability and equity.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.